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# Review of Research

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## THE IMPACT OF TECHNOLOGY ON HANDICRAFT BUSINESS –THE EXPLORATIVE PERSPECTIVE



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### ABSTRACT:

India is an agrarian country. Majority of the population live of the land. Agriculture being a seasonal occupation in India and when agricultural work is not available, the rural folk carry out some handicraft work like fashioning out simple tools or some decorative fixtures. Thus, handicrafts provide part time employment to the agricultural population.

India has a range of forest dwellers. These people are untouched by urbanization. They have traditional knowledge of medicinal herbs, the flora and the fauna, other important raw materials like

wood, bamboo and so on. Using these raw materials, they fashion out goods through skilled hand work and the simplest of tools. These goods are later sold out at the rural markets.

**KEY WORDS:** *Technology on handicraft , agricultural, medicinal herbs, etc.*

### INTRODUCTION :

In villages, there have always been families involved with a certain family trade for generations. They may be the pottery and clay work makers, the blacksmith, the carpenters, those involved in making simple tools or toys from simple material like wood. These products are generally utility based. But some of these may also be attractively created and may find use as decorative pieces in urban homes. Some of these traditional workers are experts in cloth making using the simplest of tools and no energy source other than human labor. They use raw materials like cotton, silk or any other natural fiber.

The creation created from human skill and ingenuity, from resources that are locally available, and using the simplest of tools is termed as a handicraft product. If some machines are used, then the



proportion of input by the machine is very low compared to that of the human effort.

All the above handicraft activity generates employment. It may be full time, part time or seasonal. It brings money to the rural economy. It may be able to stop the run towards urban areas by the rural youth. This will help in stopping the emptying of the villages.

Handicraft industry needs very low investment. Nevertheless it needs to be nurtured, sometimes nursed and always protected from competitors by the government of the day.

These handicraft products created by the artisans, most of whom are illiterate and rustic need a market and a buyer. This work is done by the middleman. These middlemen procure handicraft goods from the artisan at a pittance and sell it to mostly city based traders, emporium owners, even government emporiums or exporters. It is these people who sell the material to the final customer. This leads to some level of exploitation of the artisans.

To help the artisans to challenge this exploitation and to create employment in rural areas and further to use productively the skills and resources, the government of India has created several handicraft boards at the central government level and even at the state level. These help in getting the handicraft products to the markets in the cities, through Haats, trade fairs, state government emporiums, and at various exhibitions in the country and abroad. All these efforts are showing very little improvement in the situation of the artisan. Setting up emporiums and presenting the products at sales is all in the ambit of traditional marketing practices and they are not showing encouraging results. This is where internet and marketing using the internet comes in. Internet marketing makes use of the internet and all associated digital technologies to achieve marketing objectives. To use the internet marketing effectively, it has to be integrated to the traditional media. There are two major avenues of internet marketing. They are: SEO: search engine optimization. SEM: search engine marketing. Along with these the tools of social media like face book, LinkedIn watsapp are to be used. Also affiliate marketing may be used. These bring about positive changes to the trade. Briefly, they are as follows.

Reduction of transaction time and distribution costs. Enhances speed of delivery of information. The consumer is at an advantage in negotiations. Products can be advertised and made available all over the world at all times at very low costs. The major problem faced in applying this technology is lack of knowledge about it by small handicraft artisans, dealers and middlemen. The scope of this research project is to study how the internet usage will affect the fortunes of the handicraft artisan, the middlemen, the city based show room owners, traders and exporters. This will also include studying the overall impact the internet makes on the volume of handicraft trade. The study is restricted to the state of Maharashtra. Some of the famous handicrafts from this region are as follows:

**Kolhapuri Chappals:** These are handmade leather footwear. There is not a single nail or adhesive used in its making.

**Sawantwadi Handicrafts:** The Chitari's are a community involved in making wooden board games like chess sets, furniture sets, vegetable and fruit sets which are painted in vivid colours and then laquered

**Bidriware:** They are small decorative utensils made from an alloy of copper and zinc and garnished with silver. The Paandaan, hookahs are examples of these products. They make attractive souvenirs.

**Paithani Sarees:** This has a history of more than 2000 years. They are sarees made from silk and zari of gold or copper used as embellishment. It can take upto 6 months to make one saree. Narayan Peth

**Sarees:** These are silk sarees with contrasting borders with zariwork with different motifs.

A **handicraft**, sometimes more precisely expressed as **artisanal handicraft** or **handmade**, is any of a wide variety of types of work where useful and decorative objects are made completely by hand or by using only simple tools. It is a traditional main sector of craft, and applies to a wide range of creative and design activities that are related to making things with one's hands and skill, including work with textiles, moldable and rigid materials, paper, plant fibers, etc. Usually the term is applied to traditional techniques of creating items whether for personal use or as handicraft products that are both practical and aesthetic.

Collective terms for handicrafts include **artisan**, **handcrafting**, **crafting**, and **handicraftsmanship**. The term **arts and crafts** is also applied, especially in the United States and mostly to hobbyists' and children's output rather than items crafted for daily use, but this distinction is not formal, and the term is easily confused with the Arts and Crafts design movement, which is in fact as practical as it is aesthetic. Many handcrafters use natural, even entirely indigenous, materials while others may prefer modern, non-traditional materials, and even up cycle industrial materials. The individual artisanship of a handcrafted item is the paramount criterion; those made by mass handicraft production or machines are not handicraft goods.

Seen as developing the skills and creative interests of students, generally and sometimes towards a particular craft or trade, handicrafts are often integrated into educational systems, both informally and formally. Most crafts require the development of skill and the application of patience, but can be learned by virtually anyone.

Like folk art, handicraft output often has cultural and/or religious significance, and increasingly may have a political message as well, as in crafting. Many crafts become very popular for brief periods of time (a few months, or a few years), spreading rapidly among the crafting population as everyone emulates the first examples, then their popularity wanes until a later resurgence. Simple "arts and crafts" projects are a common elementary and middle school activity in both mainstream and alternative education systems around the world.

The internet continues to reach further into the home of your customers will continually open your business to direct scrutiny. As customers now have a public and direct line to your business through comments and reviews on your very own website. This is why your web presence is incredibly important to your business as it is now an appendage to how you conduct your b2b and direct customer interactions. Furthermore, television advertising is on the decline, while the hybrid of television and the internet are on an upward trend. This was detailed in a recent interview with founders of the internet enterprise just in tv where they discuss the increase in advertising sales from local and national businesses through use of the internet. These ads should also be managed by either an in-house professional marketing representative or by a third party marketing company. As this is a relatively new field, there will be advertising companies interested in only dollar signs and not necessarily the status of your company. This is one reason to keep your web presence on the internet controlled in-house.

**Objectives of the paper:**

To study the role of entrepreneurs about various aspects of handicraft business.

To examine the effect of technology changes on handicraft business.

**Research methods and data collection –**

In first phase of the study, observational analysis is made regarding quantitative growth of the



e-commerce in handicraft business .In second phase, the research design is carried out to analyze the problem.

**Primary data** – Primary data was collected directly from retailers, exporters, traders who are implementing e-commerce.

**Secondary Data** – Secondary data was gathered mainly from research articles, books on marketing management and e-commerce. , magazines and other publications from conference proceedings. The details are mentioned in bibliography.

**Questionnaire Method** – The formal instrument in the form of questionnaire is developed to test the state of e-commerce and its implementation and related problems.

**Research Design:** the research design will be exploratory and descriptive. All the steps involved in tandem with the objectives of the study.

**Statistical Tools:** spearman correlation and correlation analysis is used t.

**Sampling Design:** the sampling design adopted will be Simple purposive random sampling method has been used by the researcher

**Review of literature:**

The author Prof K. Venugopal (Faculty Member, Aditya Institute of Technology & Management, TEKKALI, Srikakulam Andhra Pradesh), Prof. Saumendra Das (Faculty Member, Aditya Institute of Technology & Management, TEKKALI, Srikakulam Andhra Pradesh) Dr. D. Vishnu Murthy (Professor, Principal , ASCAM , TEKKALI, Srikakulam Andhra Pradesh) PP 101 to 116 in research article with title “ EMAIL MARKETING: A PARADIGM SHIFT TO MARKETING” published in Journal “International Journal of Advanced Research in Management and Social Sciences” in the month July and year 2012 volume number 1 issue number 1 and ISSN - 2278-6236, have focused on few areas of E-marketing.

The author mentions that, the final target of all marketing programme is to draw interest in, create desire for and create sales of the products or services. Email marketing can be considered as of the cost effective method to reach out to prospects and customers. Email marketing is much cheaper in comparison to traditional bulk postage mail and in several cases can have a much bigger impact on direct sales and long-term relationship strength than traditional advertising. If email marketing is planned and implemented appropriately, email marketing can be an enormously effective marketing technique. Email marketing allows a buyer and seller to freely communicate with each other and build a sustainable long term relationship based on trust and value.

Secondly the author has provided some of the types of emails through which email marketing can be performed. Following are some of the type of emails:

• **Email Newsletters:**

These are newsletters which are sent directly to the pre-determined and identified list of customers and subscribers. This helps to build relationship with the customers and subscribers.

• **Direct emails**

This comprises of sending an email exclusively to communicate a promotional message. This also involves sending the email directly to the pre-determined and identified list of customers / prospective customers

• **Transactional Emails:**

These type of emails are normally initiated based on a customer's action with a company. Purchase or order confirmation emails, email receipts etc. are some of the type of transactional emails.

• **Combining Email Marketing with Other Types of Marketing**

Here the author mentions that sometimes it is better to use combination of the marketing strategies. Among the multiple marketing strategies all will not be applicable / suitable for a particular business, however there are high chances that at-least one of the marketing strategy can be used along with the email marketing strategy which would help the business to grow. Further the author has also suggested the use of traditional marketing strategies like television advertisements, radio advertisement, etc. along with the email marketing. This has an advantage that the users who are not familiar to use internet can also get the details of the product and thus they can reach out to the customers who are not using internet.

Further the author has provided some of the benefits of the email marketing to the business. The most important benefit that the author mentions is that the email marketing helps the business to reach out to a large number of people across the world. The author mentions that can also be achieved using the other marketing techniques however it would involve huge cost, which is not the scenario in case of email marketing. The author further mentions that creating an effective marketing email is time taking as a lot of thought process is required to invested as it must appeal to the recipients. However once this is ready by just clicking the mouse button, the advertise can reach out huge population. Thus it is also a faster mode of communication and reaching out to the public at large. Apart from the faster mode of communication, it is also cost effective mode of advertising. Further the author has provided some of the points that are key email marketing. First is to finalize on the content of the email and this is one of the key aspect. The second aspect is to finalize on the structure of the email. The next thing to plan and decide on the right target to whom the email should be sent to. Email marketing will only be successful only if the email reaches out to the people who would be interested in the product or the services that are being offered. Further the author has provided some of the email marketing mistakes which should be avoided.

Finally the author concludes that email marketing is one of the most effective, time saving and cost effective method of marketing the products and services. However sufficient care should be taken while designing the content of the email and the recipient list. Effective use of email marketing can help the business to grow.

The author Ranjana D. Diwate (BHMCT, Masters in Hospitality Management, Faculty, Sinhgad Institute Of Hotel Management & Catering Tech) PP 286 to 287 in research article with title "E-Marketing : Tourism Marketing Practices in Maharashtra" published in Journal "INDIAN JOURNAL OF RESEARCH" in the month April and year 2013 volume number 2 issue number 4 and ISSN - 2250-1991, have focused on few areas of E-marketing in regards to the tourism practices in Maharashtra state.

The author mentions that tourism is now considered as one of the major industry which is growing at a good pace. On account of this it is even generating the revenue as well as generating the employment opportunities for a lot of people. Hence effective marketing mechanism are need of the hour to keep up the growth of the tourism industry. E- marketing activities in tourism can be measured in this context as a method of approaching products or services from manufacturers to tourists and using Internet as a resources for sales and promotion.

The author further mentions that, in Maharashtra, there is enormous potential that's yet to be tapped, requiring an integrated method from various Government Departments and agencies.

Marketing in tourism is to be understood as the organized and synchronized execution of business policy by tourist undertaking whether private or state owned at local, regional, national or international levels to complete the optimal fulfillment of the requirements of distinguishable customer groups and in doing so to achieve a suitable return. E-marketing activities in tourism can be measured in this context as a means of approaching products or services from manufacturers to tourists and by means of Internet as a means for promotion and sales channels.

Following are some of the main marketing functions which are explained by the author:

- Market Research.
- Product formulation and development.
- Analysis and selection of target markets (segmentation).
- Distribution networks.
- Product promotion.

The author has further mentioned on some of the techniques like IP Geo location which will automatically identify the location of the visitor to the portal. By using e- marketing MTDC is working towards creating interest for both domestic and international tourists and promote Maharashtra Tourism across the globe. E- guide pertaining to all the tourist destinations will be created for online as well as for offline view and will have topic and themes such as monuments and places, events, fairs and festivals, pilgrimages, adventures and wildlife destinations etc. Further it would also help on providing the details on the method and route to the destination.

Finally the author concludes that, on account of the growth in the areas of information technology can provide an added advantage to the marketing in tourism. The author mentions that internet is one of the best source of information and the tourism industry is the industry which is an information intensive industry. Hence effective utilization of internet can help the travel and tourism industry to flourish.

The author Dr. Merlin Thanga Joy (School of Management studies, Asst. Professor, Noorul Islam University), R. Melba kani (School of Management Studies, Ph.D. Research Scholar, Noorul Islam University) PP 1 to 4 in research article with title “ Emerging Opportunities and Challenges for Cottage Industries in India” published in Journal “International Journal of Scientific and Research Publications” in the month March and year 2013 volume number 3 issue number 3 and ISSN - 2250-3153, have focused on some of the emerging opportunities in regards to the cottage industry.

The author mentions that, cottage industry is normally unorganized in character and comes under the group of small scale industry. They manufacture consumable products through the usage of conventional techniques. Thus the cottage industries help the economy by engrossing an enormous amount of outstanding workforce of the rural areas. However if other side is considered, the Cottage Industry cannot be considered as the mass producer of products. Further there is high level of risks from medium or large industries which claim a large amount of capital investment for all kinds of hi-end technologies.

Further the author stated that, it was noted that Cottage Industry has provided economic independence to the women in the developing countries and also in the developed countries. Cottage industries comprise all the family members support for the development of the family. Further government also provides their support in form of subsidy in terms of providing capital to the business. Further the government also helps in providing financial assistance to the women working in the cottage industry at a very low rate of interest which is one of the main factor.

Further the author mentioned that although the employment has improved in this industry, however the level of income of the people has not increased and definitely has decreased as the



middlemen are offering low prices to the producers but take a lot of money from the purchasers. Further the author mentions that latest foreign policies that were revised as well as the globalization are also the factors which are responsible for the present condition of cottage industry. Further the power looms are also creating a huge competition for the handloom industry.

Further the author stated that, following are some of the problems that are faced by the cottage industry:

- Limited purchasing power of raw material
- Easy financing is not available
- Problems with marketing
- Less talented staff
- Competitors

The author has further mentioned some of the step that were taken by the government. Some of the steps are: Setting up industries to help the small scale industry, making available the credit facilities, enhancing capital investment, generating a lot ancillaries etc.

Finally the author concludes that, the cottage industry are providing a lot of employment opportunities to a lot of people. Hence the author mentions that in order to reduce the unemployment in the country, development of the cottage industry is one of the key factor. This development of the cottage industry can be achieved by effective utilization of the internet and E-marketing facilities. Hence the entrepreneurs of the cottage industry, must focus and think of how to make use of the E-marketing strategies / techniques to boost their business.

**A) Impact of internet usage on the handicraft distribution channel :**

	<b>Particulars</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>Total</b>
1.	Enter new businesses or markets	65	35	00	00	00	100
2.	Expand market for existing products or services	64	33	00	03	00	100
3.	Improve interaction with customers	11	09	01	52	27	100
4.	Improve interaction with suppliers	18	16	00	34	32	100
5.	Match competitor's offerings	64	34	00	02	00	100
6.	Reduce inventory costs	59	37	00	03	01	100
7.	Reduce other costs	66	34	00	00	00	100

**B) Table showing respondent’s opinion about operational efficiency.**

On line operations	Particulars	5	4	3	2	1	Total
1.	Ordering products or services that are physically delivered	50	42	00	04	04	100
2.	Selling online products or services	51	47	00	02	00	100
3.	Supply chain management (automated procurement, automated sales, data exchange with customers online, joint business process with suppliers, cooperation with partners online, etc.)	20	15	01	45	19	100
4.	Process data or information.	62	37	00	01	00	100
5.	Can seize Immediate business opportunities	40	23	01	17	19	100

**C) Findings related to entrepreneurs opinion on the impact of internet usage:**

For evaluating the entrepreneur’s opinion on the impact of internet usage, a detailed questionnaire comprising of 7 questions was drafted. The entrepreneurs were requested for their response for each of the question. The questions that were drafted to assess the entrepreneur’s opinion towards the impact of internet usage included the parameters like Enter new businesses or markets, Expand market for existing products or services, Improve interaction with customers, Improve interaction with suppliers, Match competitor's offerings, Reduce inventory costs and Reduce other costs.

The entrepreneurs were requested to respond to each of the question in one of the category among the following multiple categories - Strongly Agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree and Strongly Disagree.

Based on the responses obtained from the entrepreneurs following are the findings on the entrepreneur’s opinion about the impact of internet usage:

**• Enter new businesses or markets:**

Majority .[ 97.5 % - Strongly Agree (75%) and Agree (22.5%)] of the entrepreneurs had agreed that by using the internet they can enter new businesses or markets. Further the entrepreneur mentioned that, by using internet they can get the details on the current trends and requirements of the customers in various markets. This would help the entrepreneurs to check and analyze if and how they can cater to these requirements in the market. Thus the entrepreneurs mentioned that this acts as a stepping stone for them to enter the new businesses or markets. High number (75%) of the entrepreneurs have strongly agreed that effective utilization on internet can help them in entering new business or markets.

**• Expand market for existing products or services:**

All [100 % - total of Strongly Agree (75%) and Agree (25%)] of the entrepreneurs had agreed that by using the internet they can expand market for existing products or services. Further the entrepreneur mentioned that, by using internet they can they advertise and market their products or

services on the internet. As these products or services are available on the internet, the products and services can be viewed by any person at any corner of the country or world. Hence the entrepreneur's products and services can reach out to huge market / customers. Thus the effective usage of the internet will help the entrepreneurs to expand their existing products and services in the new markets. Majority (75%) of the entrepreneurs have strongly agreed that by using the internet they can expand market for their existing products or services.

• **Improve interaction with customers:**

High percentage [70 % - total of strongly disagree (17.5%) and disagree (52.5%)] of entrepreneurs had disagreed that, by using the internet they can improve interaction with the customers. Further the entrepreneur mentioned that, they have published the website for their business. When the customers visit the website and they wish to get any information, they would normally post a query on the website. However the entrepreneurs are not very much interested to go and read through the queries posted by the customers as they are not at all interested in directly interacting with the customers as the interaction involves a lot of bargaining and negotiations from the customers which the entrepreneurs are interested in. On account of this, there is no further interactions between the entrepreneurs and the customers. Hence the entrepreneurs mentioned that, internet will not be helping to increase the interaction with the customer. Majority (52.5%) of the entrepreneurs have disagreed that, internet would help in improving the interaction with customers.

• **Improve interaction with suppliers:**

Substantial percentage [62.5 % - total of strongly disagree (10%) and disagree (52.5%)] of entrepreneurs had disagreed that, by using the internet they can improve interaction with the suppliers. Further the entrepreneur mentioned that, they have published the website for their business. When the suppliers visit the website of the entrepreneur and they wish to get any information from the entrepreneur, they would generally send an inquiry or post a query on the entrepreneur's website. However the entrepreneurs are not very much interested to go and read through the queries posted by the suppliers. As they are not going through the queries / inquiries posted by the entrepreneurs, they do not get the information on the inquiries posted. On account of this, there is no further interactions between the entrepreneurs and the suppliers. Hence the entrepreneurs mentioned that, internet will not be helping to increase the interaction with the suppliers. Considerable number (52.5%) of the entrepreneurs have disagreed that, internet would help in improving the interaction with suppliers.

• **Match competitors offerings:**

Majority [87.5 % - total of Strongly Agree (42.5%) and Agree (45%)] of entrepreneurs had agreed that by using the internet they can match the competitor's offerings. Further the entrepreneur mentioned that, using the internet they can search and check all the products that their competitors are offering in the market. Using this data they can analyze the current offering that they are giving to the market to what the competitor is offering in the market. Based on this study they can re-think on their offering either to match to the competitors offering or plan an approach which would enable them to design the products or services which would have an added advantage over the competitor's offerings. Fair number (45%) of the entrepreneurs have agreed that, using the internet they can match the competitor's offerings.

• **Reduce inventory cost:**

High percentage [90 % - total of Strongly Agree (42.5%) and Agree (47.5%)] of entrepreneurs had agreed that by using the internet they can reduce the inventory cost. Further the entrepreneur mentioned that, based on the experience of the entrepreneurs they get to know the requirement trends in the market. Based on this the entrepreneurs mentioned that they can plan inventory appropriately. Further if there is an urgent requirement from the customers, they can use the internet to publish their requirement and get the help of others to get the requirement done. On account of this the entrepreneur will not have to invest a lot in inventory. Hence it helps in reducing the inventory cost. Fair number (47.5%) of the entrepreneurs have agreed that, internet helps to reduce the cost of inventory.

• **Reduce other cost:**

All [90% - total of Strongly Agree (52.5%) and Agree (37.5%)] of entrepreneurs had agreed that by using the internet they can reduce other cost. Further the entrepreneur mentioned that, in absence of internet the entrepreneurs will have to travel to the customer's location for selling the product. If the customer does not like the product or request changes in product again it will involve further travel cost. By using the internet all these efforts and cost on the travel can be saved. If the entrepreneurs require to communicate any of their requirements to either their internal offices at other locations or to the customers or the suppliers they would have to use the courier services or the post office services for communication. By using the internet (by using techniques like video calling, email, chatting etc.) all this efforts, time and cost will be saved. Hence overall effective utilization of internet can help in reducing the cost related to travel costs, postage costs, hotel costs and product returns. Considerable (52.5%) of the entrepreneurs strongly agreed that, internet has helped in reducing the overall cost

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